

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SYE-00 FBOE-00

A-01 SSO-00 /039 W

-----023669 281630Z /44

O R 281555Z DEC 77

FM AMEIGASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6207

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 7996

DEPT FOR A/SY/FO, A/FBO, NEA/EX, NAIROBI FOR RSS, ATHENS FOR
OIC/TSO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, ABLD

SUBJECT: MSG AT COM RESIDENCE

REF: A. STATE 291939, B. DAMASCUS 7194, C. DAMASCUS 7235

D. RSO MEMO DATED 11/11/77, DAMASCUS 7704

AFTER THOROUGH RE-EXAMINATION OF POINTS RAISED REFTEL AND TEL
CON, POST PROGRAMMED FOLLOWING RESIDENTIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.

1. RSO MET WITH CHIEF OF POLICE TO ONCE AGAIN REQUEST
ADDITIONAL POLICE COVERAGE AT RESIDENCE AND WEAPONS LICENSES
FOR LOCAL GUARDS. BOTH SUBJECTS MET WITH RELUCTANCE, HOWEVER
ON BASIS OF HEIGHTENED SECURITY CLIMATE IN DAMASCUS, PARTICULARLY
AS CAIRO PEACE TALKS GENERATE ANTI-EGYPTIAN AND IN SOME CIRCLES
ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT, CHIEF OF POLICE AGREED TO GRANT
EXCEPTION IN PROVIDING US LICENSES TO ARM GUARDS AT
RSSIDENCE AND AGREED TO FURNISH ONE ADDITIONAL FULL TIME ZHPSSUPDQ.#
PROMISE OF ONE MORE IN NEAR FUTURE. CHIEF
OF POLICE, GEN ABBASI, HAS ALSO AGREED TO PROVIDE US WITH
LIST OF QUALIFIED GUARD APPLICANTS, ALL FORMER POLICE
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OFFICERS, FOR OUR SELECTION AND SCREENING PURPOSES.

2. GIVEN LATEST SECURITY RESOURCE, POST DESIRES TO INSTITUTE
FOLLOWING PUBLIC ACCESS AND PERIMETER SECURITY COVERAGE AT
RESIDENCE. A) A SPECIAL EIGHT MAN LOCAL GUARD FORCE TO
PROVIDE TWO ARMED FULLTIME LOCAL GUARDS (8 HOURS PER SHIFT)
INSIDE THE RESIDENCE COMPOUNDS. EACH SHIFT WILL BE SUPPLEMENTED

BY THE TWO ARMED POLICEMEN (PARA 1 ABOVE), ONE ARMED BODYGUARD, WHEN AMBASSADOR IS IN RESIDENCE, AND ONE UNARMED LOCAL GUARD. BREAKING PROGRAM DOWN FURTHER WE PLAN EMPLOY A FULLTIME ROVING PATROL AND TWO 24 HOUR FIXED POSTS, ONE LOCATED AT FRONG GATE (PUBLIC ACCESS CONTROL, CHECKING PASSES, APPOINTMENTS, ETC.) THE OTHER IN THE LOCAL GUARD COMMAND POST (TOOL SHED) SITUATIONED ON THE RESIDENCE GROUNDS IN SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE COMPOUND EQUIPPED WITH CCTV MONITORS ETC. ALL ARMED GUARDS WILL BE TRAINED BY RSO ON PROPER FIREARM TECHNIQUES, MARKSMANSHIP AND SECURITY PROCEDURES PRIOR TO ISSUING WEAPONS. GUARDS WILL ALSO BE TRAINED IN PRTECTIVE SECURITY TECHNIQUES IN EVENT ADDITIONAL BODYGUARD COVERAGE FOR COM IS NEEDED. B.) DEPLOYMENT OF TEMPORARY 24 HOUR MARINE SECURITY GUARD WITHIN THE RESIDENCE POSTIONED ON GROUND FLOOR JUST OFF MAIN ENTRANCE AND THE FOYER AREA AFFORDING HIM VIEW OF FRONT GATE AND ACCESS TO ALL PARTS OF LIVING QUARTERS. SECURITY NEED FOR TEMPORARY MSG PLACMENT WILL BE EVALUATED BY POST ON A PERIODIC BASIS. LOCATION IS IDEAL AND OF ADEQUATE SIZE TO HOUSE REMOTE CCTV MONITOR AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. SPACE COULD COMFORTABLY HANDLE TWO PEOPLE.

3. THE DEPLOYMENT OF THIS SPECIAL TEAM OF ARMED GUARDS AT THE RESIDENCE WILL NECESSITATE AN INCREASE IN OUR GUARD FORCES OF 8 ADDITIONAL GUARDS. ESTIMATED COST OF CONTRACTING 8 ADDITIONAL ARMED GUARDS TOTALS 15,000 DOLLARS
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PER YEAR. ESTIMATES FOR OTHER WORK WILL BE SENT DEPT BY SEPTTEL AS WELL AS REQUEST FOR FUNDING OF ADDITIONAL GUARD SALARIES.

4. IN ORDER TO SUPPORT 24 HOUR MARINE SECURITY GUARD COVERAGE AT RESIDENCE, TWO ADDITIONAL MARIENS ARE RQUIRED TO SUPPLEMENT EXISTING COMPLEMENT. INCREASE IN DETACHMENT WILL MAKE FOR CRAMPED BUT ADEQUATE LIVING IN PRESENT MSG RESIDENCE, HOWEVER POST IS SEARCHING FOR SUITABLE LONG TERM ALTERNATIVE. MARINE GUARD ORDERS HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO SY/FO HOWEVER THEY WILL BE AMENDED ONCE ARMED LOCAL GUARDS ARE DEPLOYED ON THE SCENE. ONCE CHANGE TAKEN WILL NO LONGER REQUIRE MSG PARTOL GROUNDS OF RESIDENCE, ARMED GUARDS AND POLICE WILL PERFORM THE FUNCTION; MARINE WILL MONITOR BY CCTV.

5. IMMUNITIES. IMMUNITIES OF THE MARINE GUARD STATIONED AT THE RESIDENCE SHOULD BE NO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE MARINE GUARD ON DUTY AT THE CHANCERY. BOTH PROPERTIES ARE OWNED BY THZTUS GOVERNMENT AND BOTH, UNDER SYRIAN LAW AND PRACTICE, ENJOY EXTRATERRITORIAL DIPLOMATIC STATUS. SYRIA, AS A SIGNATORY TO THE VIENNA

CONVENTION ON DIPLOMATIC INTERCOURSE AND IMMUNITIES, RECOGNIZES THAT THE RESIDENCE OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION IS PART OF THE "PREMISES OF THE MISSION" (ARTICLE I (I)) AND THAT IT IS INVIOABLE. THE AGENTS OF THE RECEIVING STATES MAY NOT ENTER THESE PREMISES EXCEPT WITH THE CONSENT OF THE HEAD OF THE MISSION (ARTICLE 22(3)). MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL STAFF OF THE MISSION, WHICH INCLUDES THE MARINE GUARDS, ENJOY IMMUNITY FROM THE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION OF THE RECEIVING STATE (ARTICLE 37(A), ARTICLE 31 (1)) AND SHALL NOT BE LIABLE TO ANY FORM OF ARREST OR DETENTION (ARTICLE 37(A), ARTICLE 29).

6. AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS: I STRONGLY ENDORSE INTRODUCTION OF THE EXTRA SECURITY MEASURES DESCRIBED IN THIS MESSAGE.
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I AM ALSO REVIEWING EXTRA PROTECTION FOR OTHER MISSION PERSONNEL. SINCE OUR LAST SUBMISSION (REF C), THE LEVEL OF ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT HAS RISEN IN EXTREMIST PALESTINIAN CIRCLES AND HAS BEEN ECHOED IN OFFICIAL SYRIAN MEDIA ATTACKING THE AMERICAN ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS. THESE ATTACKS HAVE ESCALATED MARKEDLY IN THE PAST MONTH. I RECOGNIZE THAT THE COST FACTORS IN INSTITUTING THESE MEASURES ARE CONSIDERABLE. I WILL KEEP THE NEED FOR THIS PROTECTION UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW WITH A VIEW TO CUTTING BACK OR ELIMINATING THE MARINE ASSIGNED TO THE RESIDENCE AT SOME FUTURE POINT IN TIME. I FORESEE A PERMANENT NEED FOR THE AUGMENTED LOCAL GUARD FORCE. 1978 PROMISES TO BE A YEAR OF HIGH RISK AND THEREFORE REQUEST ALL CONCERNED TO REVIEW AND GIVE SPEEDIEST POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO PROPOSED ARRANGMENTS.
MURPHY

NOTE BY OC/T: TEXT AS RECEIVED. SERVICE ON REQUEST.

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